

Amendments to the Claims of the Embree patent

17. (Amended) A vacuum cleaner, comprising:

an intake body having an intake opening for receiving a flow of air and particulates, the intake body further having an intake flow area and at least two exit openings;

a filter element to separate the particulates from the flow of air;

at least two conduits, each having a first aperture coupled to one of the exit openings of the intake body and a second aperture in fluid communication with the filter element, and with each conduit of the at least two conduits having a conduit flow area wherein the sum of the conduit flow areas is less than the intake flow area in order to accelerate the flow through the conduits; and

an airflow propulsion device coupled between the intake opening and the exit openings for moving the flow of air from the intake opening to the filter element.

18. (Cancelled)

22. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:

an intake body having an intake opening configured to be positioned proximate to a surface for receiving a flow of air and particulates, the intake body further having at least two exit openings for simultaneously directing the flow of air and particulates out of the intake body;

a filter element for separating at least some of the particulates from the flow of air and particulates;

at least two conduits in fluid communication with the intake body [and the filter element]; [and]

a manifold in fluid communication with the filter element and in fluid communication with the at least two conduits, with the manifold including a first portion coupled to a first conduit and a second portion coupled to a second conduit and wherein at least two air flows in the at least two conduits are merged in the manifold and provided to the filter element;

an airflow propulsion device for moving the flow of air and particulates from the intake opening to the filter element.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Amended) The vacuum cleaner of claim 22 wherein a first conduit extends independently of a second conduit from the intake body to the manifold [filter element].

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Amended) The vacuum cleaner of claim 22 wherein [one] a conduit of the at least two conduits is in fluid communication with each of the at least two exit openings of the intake body.

30-32. (Cancelled)